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(iii) The divers have been permitted to fish the 'Pathula' variety of chanks in the shallow waters during the off-season when they have no other employment. A price of Re. 0–1–0 per full-sized 'Pathula' chank fished during the season 1956–57 will be paid to the divers.

(iv) The 'Pass Book' savings system has been introduced and facilities for withdrawal of savings at times of emergency during the chank fishing season have also been ordered to be granted to the divers.

Construction of a new bridge at Saidapet

* 355 *Q.*—Sri K. ARANGANATHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state whether there is any proposal to construct a new bridge in the place of the old one across the Cooum River at Saidapet, Madras?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : There is no Cooum river at Saidapet. (Laughter.)

The bridge referred to by the Member is presumably the Marmalong bridge across the Adayar river. Preliminary proposals for the reconstruction of this bridge are under the consideration of the Government.

SRI K. VINAYAKAM : Sir, is the Hon. Minister aware of the fact that this bridge has been the cause for a series of accidents resulting in the death of military personnel as also some employees of the Madras Government? Day-in and day-out we see trucks colliding on the bridge. Will the Government therefore think of putting up a new bridge apart from taking up the reconstruction work of the dilapidated bridge?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : Reconstruction means only reconstruction, that is, repairing the bridge, widening it, etc., so as to meet the demands of traffic, utilizing to the best possible extent the present construction and reinforcing it. These are under the consideration of the Government. But then, the bridge being situated on the Great Southern Trunk Road under the National Highways, we are trying to see whether we could not get the entire cost from the Government of India. This aspect of the question is being investigated.

SRI K. ARANGANATHAN : ஸார், தென் ஆற்காடு ஜில்லாவில் மழைக்காலத்தில் வெள்ளம் வந்தபோது தம்பிபட்டி என்ற வாராவதியானது அடிவாங்கிவிட்டது. அதே போல் அதிக போக்குவரத்து இருக்கக்கூடிய அடையார் வாராவதியிலேயும் இந்த நிலை ஏற்பட்டு அடிவாங்கிவிட்டால் அரியலூரில் ஏற்பட்ட பெரும் விபத்தைப்போல் விபத்து ஏற்படும் என்ற பயமும் பீதியும் மக்களுக்கு இருக்கிறது. ஆகவே உடனடியாக அதை புதிதாக கட்டுவதற்கு அரசாங்கம் முன்வருமா ?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : அது ஆலோசனையில் இருந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறது.

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SRI S. DAIVASIGAMONEY : May I know from the Hon. Minister how long this question has been under the very serious consideration of the Government? May I also know how soon the question of reconstruction of this bridge will be taken up?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : This is under consideration only from last year or so. First the bridge was taken over by the Public Works Department from the Saidapet Municipality. Then the City limits were extended and this became a matter between the Corporation and the Government of Madras. The question whether the Corporation would be able to do it by itself or whether we could give half the cost came up. In the meanwhile our Government and the Corporation are trying to see whether the whole cost could not come from the Centre. This has to be further investigated. It is because of these considerations that there has been delay, if at all it can be called delay, in taking up the reconstruction of the bridge.

SRI S. C. C. ANTHONY PILLAI : In view of the fact that the bridge is in a dilapidated condition and the Corporation is incapable of maintaining it in proper condition, until such time as the Centre comes forward to give a subsidy, will the Government of Madras assist the Corporation of Madras in maintaining the bridge?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : There is no question of giving any assistance towards maintenance. It has got to be reconstructed. It is a capital work, not a question of maintenance at all.

SRI K. VINAYAKAM : Sir, since this is a capital work and it will take a long time for reconstruction of the bridge, will the Government issue instructions to the authorities concerned to remove all the woden railings that are fitted to the bridge and insert iron bars so that accidents can be avoided?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : I do not know whether it is an expert opinion. Even if iron railings are inserted, the damage might be more severe as there will severe resistance.

SRI V. R. NAGARAJAN : : Since I understand that the bridge is a century old and since also the heaviest traffic passes over that bridge, being the nearest approach to Madras, May I urge the Hon. Minister to expedite the matter and reconstruct the bridge so that no unforeseen accidents may happen?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : That is what I have already stated. We are trying to reconstruct the bridge. We are expecting money from the Central Government. If we do it now, we will lose that money as we cannot then claim from the Central Government.

SRI S. PANCHAKSHARAM : This bridge is a very important bridge and it is on one of the national highways. The reconstruction of the bridge will cost several lakhs of rupees and therefore it is

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just and proper that the Centre should come forward and meet the entire cost. So, will this Government press upon the Centre to meet the entire cost of the work and reconstruct the bridge immediately?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : We are already taking steps in that direction and impressing upon the Central Government that this bridge is a very important one and that it requires reconstruction. But it is taking a lot of time for them to come to a decision and also in fixing the liability of the Corporation, the Madras Government and the Centre in regard to the construction of the bridge.

SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM : கனம் மந்திரி அவர்கள் மத்திய சர்க்காரை கேட்டுக்கொண்டு இருக்கிறோம் என்று சொல்லுகிறார்களே ஒழிய எவ்வளவு காலமாக கேட்டுக்கொண்டு இருக்கிறார்கள்? என் இவ்வளவு தாமதம் ஏற்படுகின்றன? என்று சொல்லவில்லை. அதோடு நம்முடைய ராஜ்யத்திலுள்ள ரோடுகள் கொஞ்சம் நன்றாக இருப்பதாகவும் சொல்லப்படுகிறது. ஆனால் நம்முடைய ராஜ்ய ரோடுகள் மற்ற ராஜ்ய ரோடுகளைப் போல கேவலமாகிற வரையில் விடாமல் நம்முடைய ராஜ்ய ரோடுகளை அபிவிருத்தி செய்ய மத்திய சர்க்கார் போதுமான நிதி ஒதுக்கியது வாஸ்தவமா? இல்லை யென்றால் அதனால்தான் தாமதம் ஆகிறது என்பது வாஸ்தவமா?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : It may be presumed that they might think so but we have not received any communication to that effect as alleged by the hon. Member.

SRI S. C. C. ANTHONY PILLAI : In view of the fact that the Central Government will never move in the matter of repairing bridges till there are major accidents like the Railway accidents, will the Government take some more positive steps to seek Central assistance?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : How to take positive steps? To demonstrate an accident ! We have already impressed upon them that it is a very vital bridge and beyond that how could we demonstrate in a positive manner?

SRI P. B. K. RAJA CHIDAMBARAM : Are the plans and estimates for the proposed reconstruction work ready or are they going to be got ready only after this Government have got grant from the Centre?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : The preparation of plans and estimates is not a big thing and it will not take any length of time.

SRI K. ARANGANATHAN : I would like to know from the Hon. Minister the probable time that it may take for the reconstruction of the bridge.

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : We have not taken up the question of reconstructing the bridge and so why should we bother about the time now? Of course, it will be done as expeditiously as possible.

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SRI S. PANCHAKSHARAM : Sir, Saidapet was included in the City municipal limits only recently, say about ten years ago. Therefore, it is not just and proper to call upon the Corporation to meet any portion of the cost of the work and may I request the Government to urge the Central Government that they should bear the entire cost?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : That is what I have already stated. We are trying to get the entire amount from the Centre by stating that a part of the national highway passes over that bridge. It is for the Central Government to decide whether they will bear the entire cost of the work, or divide the responsibility. We have to await their decision.

SRI S. DAIVASIGAMONEY : I am afraid we are missing the point. To most of the supplementaries, the answer I believe, is : 'We are expecting a reply from the Centre'. The question has got to be approached this way : whether the reconstruction of this bridge has got to be taken up immediately because of the danger apprehended. So, irrespective of the consent of the Central Government, will this Government take up the reconstruction of the bridge at once?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : This is a matter which involves money and that is why the whole trouble. We have to go by priorities and we have to get their sanction. We cannot execute it ourselves.

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN : Is not this bridge exclusively on the National Highway and if so should not the Centre be called upon to bear the entire cost of the reconstruction of the bridge?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : Wherever a part of the National Highway intervenes in a municipal area, the difficult comes in. Here the division of responsibility comes in because it is within the municipal area though the national highway passes through the municipal area. So we have got to make out a case for getting the entire amount from the Centre and that is being attempted now.

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : The point is this. With reference to the National Highways, it is the entire responsibility of the Central Government to bear the cost of the construction of bridges and the maintenance of national highways. But as far as the bridges on the National Highways within the municipal limits are concerned, it is the responsibility of the Corporation or the Municipalities along with the State Government to look after them. Now we want to make an exception as far as this bridge is concerned, because of its importance. But I may assure hon. Members that whether we get assistance from the Central Government or not, in view of its importance it will be taken up. Now we are trying to find out whether we will get some assistance from the Central

Government. Apart from the question of Central assistance, we will take up the matter and arrive at a decision as early as possible.

Relief to tappers of Tirunelveli district

* 356 *Q.*—Sri M. KALYANASUNDARAM (on behalf of Sri N. K. Palanisamy) : Will the Hon. the Minister for Religious Endowments and Transport be pleased to state whether any relief has been given to the tappers of Tirunelveli district during the year 1956, who are unemployed since all the palmyras are dried up due to continuous drought?

The Hon. Sri B. PARAMESWARAN : Relief in the nature of ameliorative measures by way of production of palm jaggery, undertaking milk supply activities, and collection of palmyra fibre and stalks has been rendered to the tappers of Tirunelveli district. Attempts are also being made to organize a match factory at Konatikottai to provide employment to the ex-tappers and their families in and around Sattankulam area.

Sri P. SELVARAJ : Apart from the relief measures that have been taken, may I know from the Hon. Minister whether the Government have made any investigation to open a large factory so as to employ ex-tappers?

The Hon. Sri B. PARAMESWARAN : I do not know what the hon. Member means by " factory ". We have got schemes and some of them are to be sanctioned by the Government of India. As soon as they are sanctioned, we will see that as many unemployed persons as possible are employed.

Sri S. C. C. ANTHONY PILLAI : Will the Hon. Minister be pleased to state how many tappers are in need of relief in this particular district?

The Hon. Sri B. PARAMESWARAN : In the southern portion of the Tiruchendur taluk—and not the entire district—about 6,400 persons need relief.

11-40 a.m. Sri K. R. NALLASIVAM : மரமேறுபவர்கள் நன்றாக விவசாயம் செய்யத்தெரிந்தவர்கள். அந்த பிராந்தியத்திலுள்ள புறம்போக்கு நிலங்களை வேலையில்லா திண்டாட்டத்தில் அடிப்பட்டு இருக்கக்கூடிய இந்த "டாப்பர்ஸ்" க்கு கொடுக்க சர்க்கார் ஏற்பாடு செய்யுமா? இல்லையானால் அவர்களின் வேலையில்லா திண்டாட்டத்தைப் போக்க சர்க்கார் ஏற்பாடு செய்யுமா?

The Hon. Sri B. PARAMESWARAN : வேலையில்லாதவர்களுக்கு வேலை கொடுப்பதற்கு இரண்டாவது ஐந்தாண்டு திட்டத்தில் ஏற்பாடு செய்யப்பட்டு இருக்கிறது. அங்கத்தினர் சொன்ன யோசனையும் கவனிக்கப் படும்.

Sri A. M. RATHNASWAMY : As a result of introduction of Prohibition by our Government not only in Tirunelveli district but in all districts including Madras City, hundreds of ex-tappers